



The Louisville Historian

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Louisville History Foundation, and Louisville Historical Commission

Winter 2015

The Harpers and Harper Lake: How One Family Left Its Mark on Louisville, Colorado

By Bridget Bacon, Museum Coordinator

Harper Lake, located at what is today called the Leon A. Wurl Wildlife Sanctuary, has long been a place for recreation in Louisville. People now in their seventies, eighties, and nineties who were born between around 1915 and 1940 well remember trekking as young people from their homes in downtown Louisville all the way up to Harper Lake for ice skating and hockey games in the winter and swimming in the summer. They remember that the lake, which was smaller and shallower then, would stay frozen all winter.

The only equipment that a boy needed back then for a game of hockey was a pair of ice skates, since the hockey sticks were typically fashioned from tree branches and the puck was often nothing more than a flattened can. Boys would bring old rubber tires up to the lake and burn them on the shore for warmth. Today, activities like ice skating, swimming, and burning tires aren't permitted at the lake, but people now enjoy walking and biking around it, seeing the stunning views of the Front Range from the lake, and fishing and boating.

At the Louisville Historical Museum, people often ask me about the history of Harper Lake. Most Louisville residents aren't aware that it was originally created in the 1890s as a water reservoir. John H. Harper had purchased hundreds of acres of farmland in the area of

what is now Harper Lake, before the town of Louisville was established in 1878 and even before Colorado became a state in 1876.

John H. Harper, who was born in Scotland in 1825 and died in Colorado in 1874, served as mayor of Denver for a term in 1871-1872, and his purchase of land in our area for farming and potentially coal mining by the early 1870s is one of several examples of Colorado's "movers and shakers" of the late 1800s casting their eyes to

eastern Boulder County for the investment opportunities that they saw.

John H. Harper came to the United States at the age of eight with his family. He married Margaret Johnston in Pennsylvania in 1852 and they soon came west. By 1865, the Harper family was living in Denver, which had been established not

long before, in 1858. At the time that Harper was

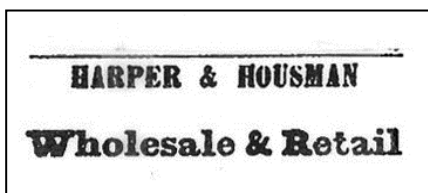
mayor, Denver's population was likely still under 10,000, but the town was growing fast and would reach 35,000 by 1880.

John H. Harper established a hardware store in Denver. In its early years, his store was known as "Harper, Steel & Co.," but the later "Harper & Housman" was the best known of his partnerships. According to early advertisements, Harper supplied early residents of



The big cottonwood tree at Harper Lake in 2015.

Denver with hardware, mining and farming tools, stoves, tinware, and copperware.



Excerpt from an 1868 Denver Rocky Mountain News advertisement for Harper & Housman's hardware store.

John H. Harper's tenure as mayor of Denver was for a one-year term. According to newspaper coverage, his term was marked by an energetic crackdown on Denver gambling houses and cautious city spending. He was also credited with his leadership in raising thousands of dollars from Denver citizens to benefit people in Chicago who were made homeless in the Great Chicago Fire in October 1871. Not surprisingly, given his prominence in Denver as a businessman and government leader, he built what was described as a very fine mansion with a tower. Records and newspaper articles indicate that it was built at 14th and Curtis in Denver and was later purchased by Colorado industrialist David H. Moffat.



***Denver Mayor John H. Harper.
Photo credit: Denver Public Library.***

Harper purchased over 1,000 acres in the vicinity of what would become Louisville by the early 1870s. (Unfortunately, the exact date or dates of his purchase could not be located.) It is believed that the main activity for the land was cattle ranching. However, Harper soon became a partner with William Davidson, Charles C. Welch, Charles B. Kountze, and others in opening up areas for coal mining in the area. It seems appropriate that today, a new pedestrian underpass under McCaslin Boulevard connects Harper Lake with the Davidson Mesa, named for William Davidson, Boulder County farming and mining entrepreneur and Harper's investment partner.

Harper died in 1874 at the age of only 49. Whether he ever actually lived on his ranch property is not known. His wife, Margaret, and their grown children, who were Jean, John J., and George, survived him. They are known for having lived on the farm that they inherited and they were actively involved in its operation and in

the life of neighboring towns. The exact location of their house and ranch buildings is not known.

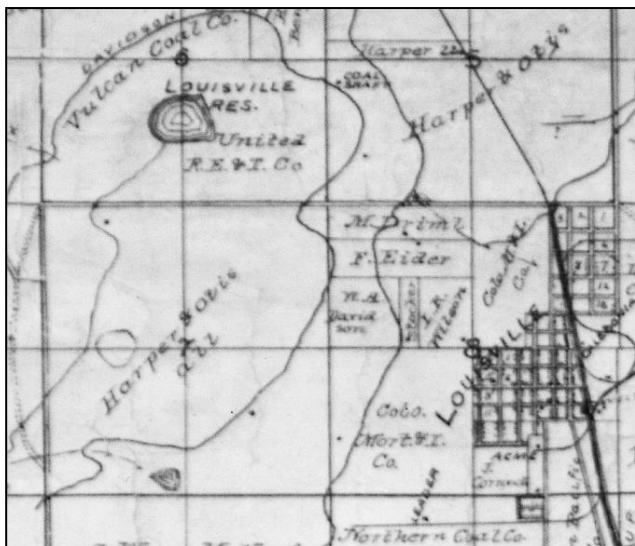
Jean Neal Harper, in particular, left her mark on Colorado communities. Born in 1855, she was reported to have had some college education at a college in Maine. She married Oran Otis, who had worked in her father's hardware store in Denver, in 1875. Upon moving to the Harper farm near Louisville, she became a member of Boulder's Fortnightly Club, a women's club whose members brought culture and education to Boulder. As a result of her experience with the Fortnightly Club and her close friendship with Jennie Baker, who was the wife of the University of Colorado President James Baker, Jean Harper Otis then became one of the founders of a group in Louisville with a similar purpose called the Saturday Study Club. According to a 1948 letter written by Myrtle Bittner to describe the founding of Louisville's Saturday Study Club in the 1890s, Mrs. Otis "organized the Club ... and attended to details generally. Those were Horse and Buggy days."

Jean Harper Otis then took charge of a state-wide program, implemented in January 1900, to send boxes of books called travelling libraries to small communities in Colorado that didn't have public libraries. (Louisville may have been one of these towns, as it didn't have even a small library until 1924.) This was done as a project of the Colorado Federation of Women's Clubs, which included Boulder's Fortnightly Club and Louisville's Saturday Study Club. A year after the program started, it was reported in the *Denver Rocky Mountain News* that as a result of the program led by Mrs. Otis and carried on by others, women's clubs throughout the state had provided financial support for 58 boxes (each with 50 books) that had gone to 35 places in Colorado, reaching an estimated 10,000 readers. Two railroad companies even provided free transportation to get the boxes to their destinations. The impact of these travelling libraries on literacy and culture in the young state of Colorado would be hard to measure, but was likely significant. This effort was even recognized nationally, according to the Colorado Historical Society's 1993 publication *Women's Clubs of Denver*.

Jean Harper Otis and Oran Otis then moved in the early 1900s to Redlands, California, perhaps to escape Colorado's cold winters or to seek a role in the developing navel orange industry. However, Jean continued to be one of the owners of hundreds of acres of Harper land in the Louisville area for the next several decades. In fact, the 1909 Drumm's Wall Map of Louisville shows "Harper & Otis" as the owners of large parcels of farm land to the north and west of original downtown Louisville.

Jean's youngest brother, George Harper, graduated from Yale University and became a civil engineer. In October 1885, at the age of 23, he "devoted himself exclusively to stock farming at Louisville" until 1892, according to his obituary. One can imagine that George's civil engineering expertise contributed to the design of the water reservoir and ditches that the Harpers would soon put in. He next became the Sanitary Engineer for the City of Denver, then worked in other states in various positions.

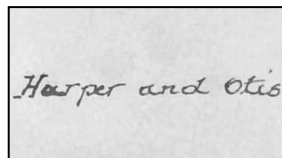
The middle sibling, John J. Harper, had the longest connection with the Harper ranch northwest of downtown Louisville and was the member of the Harper family who actually created Harper Lake as a water reservoir. He was a lawyer who had attended Columbia Law School. According to the plat that he filed with the Boulder County Recorder in 1897, Harper Reservoir was planned to cover ten surface acres. A feeder ditch would connect Harper Reservoir with the Louisville Lateral Ditch that extended north to connect to the Louisville Reservoir and southwest to the Marshall area. According to the Feb. 8, 1963 *Louisville Times*, the Louisville Reservoir to the north of Harper Lake had been created several years earlier, in 1888.



The start of Harper Reservoir with Louisville Reservoir to the north of it and the town to the east, as shown in an excerpt from the 1899 Willits Farm Map.

According to records, "Harper & Otis" owned 1,117 acres as of 1892. Their land included all of Section 7, T1S R69W (consisting of one square mile, or 640 acres) and parts of others. Today, the area covered by Section 7 extends from South Boulder Road south to the location of the Louisville Recreation Center and Arboretum, and from the area on the west side of McCaslin Boulevard all the way east to the eastern edge of Coyote Run Open

Space. Louisville's Alfalfa's store and parts of the Steel Ranch development sit atop additional areas of the Harper & Otis land. Over the years, the original Harper land was divided and sold to members of the Beauprez, Clyncke, Hocheder, and other farming families, and part of the land became the location of Louisville's Paclamar Dairy in the 1960s. The USGS map dated 2001 showing coal mine locations in eastern Boulder County reveals that coal mining extended completely under Harper Lake. This was due to mining activities of the nearby Matchless Mine, which operated on Harper & Otis land from 1903 to 1927.



The names of Harper and Otis appear as landowners in several places on the 1909 Drumm's Wall Map of Louisville.

We don't know whether the two Harper Streets in Louisville were named for this Harper family. It is possible, since the earlier street, which is in Louisville's Little Italy neighborhood, was established in 1890.

According to the November 14, 1979 *Louisville Times*, the Louisville City Council passed a resolution to name "the open space owned by the City of Louisville surrounding Harper Lake" the Leon A. Wurl Wildlife Sanctuary. Leon Wurl (1931-1998) was the Louisville city administrator in the 1970s and early 1980s.



Harper Lake in 1985 before its expansion. Photo Credit: Carnegie Branch Library for Local History/Daily Camera collection, Vern Walker, photographer.

Louisville grew quickly in the 1980s. Early in the decade, the City recognized a need for additional water storage, particularly to help get through winters. According to articles in the *Daily Camera*, Louisville had to borrow water from the Denver Water Board's holdings in Gross Reservoir for two consecutive winters in the early 1980s. The City decided to enlarge Harper Lake through a major operation that would involve 300

to 400 truck trips a day, Monday through Saturday, from 7 AM to 6 PM, to move dirt. The goal was to expand the surface area to some extent, but more significantly, the lake was made much deeper. This was reported as resulting in a lake with twelve times more water capacity than it had had before.



***Crews enlarging Harper Lake in May 1985.
Photo credit: Carnegie Branch Library for
Local History/Daily Camera collection, Karen
Schulenburg, photographer.***

By April 1985, the dirt-moving project was in full swing. Crews hauled the dirt across McCaslin to Davidson Mesa and to areas near the Superior-Louisville interchange on US 36. In August 1985, just before the first of 200 million gallons of water began to flow into the lake, the *Daily Camera* quoted former Public Works Director Tom Phare as saying that it would be “the last time you’ll ever see the bottom’ of the lake.”



The expanded Harper Lake in 2007.

The enterprising and energetic members of the Harper family did not leave descendants, but they certainly left their mark on Louisville. They provided Louisville with the beginnings of what every town needs to thrive: water and books.

The 1870s activities of Davidson, Welch, and Harper that eventually led to the founding of Louisville are described in the Fall 2010 issue of The Louisville Historian in an article by J. Peter Lindquist entitled “The Untold Story of Louisville’s First Years.” The early projects of the Saturday Study Club are described in the Winter 2013 issue of The Louisville Historian in an article by Bridget Bacon entitled “Raising Money for Louisville: How People Fundraised and Had Fun Doing It.” Harry Mayor wrote about playing hockey on Harper Lake in around 1930 in “The Skater’s Dilemma” in the Spring 2007 issue of The Louisville Historian. All three issues can be viewed online at the Museum’s website or picked up as hard copies at the Louisville Historical Museum.

If you have information or photos about Harper Lake or the Harper Family to contribute, please contact the Museum.

Wreaths Across America Day

About 250 veterans buried at the Louisville Cemetery were honored in a touching ceremony on Saturday, December 13, 2014 as part of National Wreaths Across America Day. Thank you so much to the Broomfield Rotary for its sponsorship of the Louisville Cemetery event, and thank you to the Parks & Recreation Department of the City of Louisville for its help and support. Thank you to those individuals who helped to add even more veterans’ names to the original list compiled last year and to those who helped with the event itself.

The accompanying photo shows a wreath being laid on the Louisville Cemetery grave of Alfred Dhieux, a Louisville Marine who was killed in the World War II Battle of Peleliu in 1944.



Federal Troops in Louisville - Update!

By Bridget Bacon, Museum Coordinator

The lead article of the Fall 2014 *Louisville Historian* focused on the federal troops (Troop F of the Twelfth Cavalry from Fort Robinson, Nebraska) who were stationed in Louisville for eight months from May 1914 until January 1915. Federal soldiers were sent to Louisville and other hot spots in Colorado to help keep the peace following violence relating to coal mine strikes in the state. After seeing the article, Chuck and Lois Waneka paid a visit to the Historical Museum so that Chuck could donate a special item from his family that relates to the federal troops.

Chuck's mother, Bessie Dixon of Louisville, was 22 years old in May 1914 and worked at Lewton McCorkle's grocery store on Main Street. Chuck explained that she struck up a friendship with one of the federal soldiers, a "Sergeant Ahern." The name of Sergeant James D. Ahern does, in fact, appear as a sergeant on a list of federal soldiers who were stationed in Louisville. According to information available about him through *Ancestry.com*, he was about the same age as Bessie.



Sergeant Ahern presented Bessie Dixon with the gift of a book entitled "Drill Regulations and Outlines of First Aid for the Hospital Corps, United States Army." It is a revised edition dated 1908. It contains instructions on everything from how to march to how to carry a stretcher. The book is even stamped "Troop 'F.' 12th Cavalry." He signed it "Sergt. Ahern," and Bessie Dixon signed it as well with the date of November 16, 1914. Thank you so much to Chuck Waneka for donating this item to the Louisville Historical Museum. It is one of very few things relating to the federal soldiers that were left behind when the soldiers boarded the train to return to Nebraska and that have survived to this day. Chuck also was the donor of most of the photos that accompanied the *Historian* article about the federal troops. Thank you, Chuck!

The accompanying photo is from the collection of the Louisville Historical Museum and shows a soldier on a horse. There was no identifying information given when the photo was donated to the Museum in 1988, but it is possible that the photo was taken of a federal soldier in Louisville in 1914-1915.

Upcoming Historical Programs

The public is invited to join us for our upcoming historical programs! For more information, please visit www.louisville-library.org; email museum@louisvilleco.gov; or call the Museum at 303-665-9048.

Brown Bag Presentation, Thursday, March 5, Noon to 1 PM

The topic for the next Brown Bag is based on the lead article of this *Louisville Historian*, "[The Harpers and Harper Lake: How One Family Left Its Mark on Louisville, Colorado.](#)" We will look at how Colorado's movers and shakers were attracted to the Louisville area for its investment opportunities and specifically at the lasting impact of the Harper family on Louisville. Please bring your memories of Harper Lake to share! Participants are welcome to bring their lunches.

Location: first floor meeting room of the Louisville Public Library, 951 Spruce Street.

Historical & Genealogical Program, Wednesday, May 20, 7 PM

For Preservation Month in May, we will look at "[The Homes of Our Families: Connecting with the Homes of Ancestors and Leaving a Record for Future Generations.](#)"

Location: first floor meeting room of the Louisville Public Library, 951 Spruce Street.

Other Upcoming Programs

Look for more historical programs from the Museum this year! One program will look at DNA testing for genealogical purposes. We'll also have our regular Brown Bag presentations and summer downtown walking tours!



***New Developments for the
Louisville History Foundation
By Catherine Wessling,
Louisville History Foundation Director***

The Louisville Historical Foundation is gearing up for a busy 2015 with new directors joining the board and a new website.

We are pleased to announce a brand new website for The Louisville History Foundation, www.LouisvilleHistoryFoundation.org. With the new website, it will be easier for the community to learn about what we are working on throughout the year. On the website, you'll find information about local events hosted by the Foundation and the Historical Museum. You will also learn about our sponsored and funded projects.

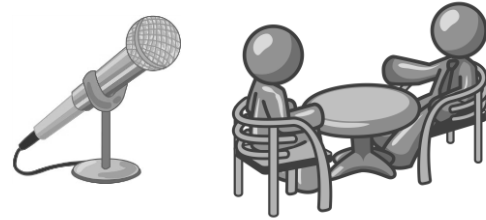
Additionally, those wishing to become a member, give a gift membership, renew a membership, or make a donation to the Foundation can now do all of these things via the new website.

In 2014, the Foundation purchased a new video camera for the Historical Museum's Oral History Program. In fact, the Foundation has supported the Oral History Program by paying for the needed equipment ever since the current program started in 2009. This has made it possible for Museum staff and volunteers to capture the priceless stories and memories of past and present Louisville residents. In 2014, the Foundation also funded the cleaning and conservation of the City's antique safe that is now on display at the Louisville City Hall.

Our primary project last year, however, was partnering with the City of Louisville to bring in Metcalfe Architecture & Design to conduct the Louisville Historical Museum needs assessment. The goal of this project was to determine how to address the City's needs for improvements to the Museum campus. This includes planning for the construction of a new building on the campus that would provide proper collection storage for artifacts and archival materials, adequate work space for staff and volunteers, and ADA compliant restrooms. The resulting assessment was shared with City Council on Tuesday, December 16, 2014. To see the needs assessment report and read about Metcalfe's exciting proposals for the campus, check out our new website: www.LouisvilleHistoryFoundation.org.

The mission of the non-profit Louisville History Foundation, Inc. is to stimulate broad-based support for local history and the Louisville Historical Museum and

to encourage the development of the Museum through fundraising, advocacy and education.



LOUISVILLE HISTORY FOUNDATION

Missy DiSalle Diehl
Marilyn Hunt
Lynn Christopher Koglin
David Marks
Daniel Mellish
Catherine Fahey Wessling
Bridget Bacon (ex officio)
Beth Barrett (ex officio)

***Louisville History Book Club
By Anne Robinson,
Historical Commission Member***

The History Book Club meets from 6:00 to 7:45 PM on the second Wednesday of each month from September to May in the second floor Board Room of the Louisville Public Library. Unlike most book clubs in which members all read the same book, in this book club we select a topic and everyone reads what they wish on the topic. Participants read books or articles and we discuss what we learned with the group. Members of the public are welcome to join us, and newcomers should feel free to come and observe.

February Topic: 19th Century Poets
Wednesday, February 11, 2015

March Topic: Lafayette, Colorado
Wednesday, March 11, 2015

April Topic: Mormon Exodus
Wednesday, April 8, 2015

May Topic: 19th Century Colorado Photographers & Photography
Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Historical Museum Contact Information and Fall/Winter Hours

The Museum is now observing its Fall/Winter hours! It is currently open for public hours from 10:00 to 3:00 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. If you are planning a visit, please check ahead in order to make sure of the current hours.

Special appointments at other times are possible. Museum staff can be reached at museum@louisvilleco.gov or 303-665-9048.

The Louisville Historical Museum is owned and operated by the City of Louisville as part of the Department of Library & Museum Services. It is located at 1001 Main Street. Its mailing address is 749 Main Street, Louisville, CO 80027.

LOUISVILLE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Steve Domenico
Paula Elrod
David Ferguson
Jonathan Ferris
Lynn Christopher Koglin
Gladys Levis-Pilz
Daniel Mellish
Anne Robinson
Betty Scarpella
Julie VanLaanen

Don't Miss an Issue of The Louisville Historian

Membership in the Louisville History Foundation is a must for those interested in Louisville's unique history and cultural character! Members receive the quarterly *Louisville Historian* with substantive articles about Louisville history.

A yearly membership is \$15.00 for an individual and \$25.00 for a family. A yearly Business Sponsorship is \$100.00.

You may pick up a membership form at the Historical Museum, visit the Museum website at www.louisville-library.org to print out a membership form, or call the Museum at 303-665-9048 for assistance. Please make any checks payable to the Louisville History Foundation, Inc. You can also now join and renew online at www.louisvillehistoryfoundation.org.

Thank You for Your Monetary Donations!

Thank you to the following people and organizations for their recent generous monetary donations, other than memorial donations, to the Louisville History Foundation and Museum.

Jim Barlow Family
George Brown
Sally Burlingame
Lori & Scott Chandler
John Covell
Hank & Penny Dalton
Melvin DiLorenzo
Rudy Dionigi
Virginia Evans
David & Deborah Fahey
Pamela Forcey
Haddock Insurance Agency
Hannah Harper
Theresa & Tony Heatherton
Heron Family
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Robert Phillips & Kelly Johannes
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Christopher Leh Family
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Dennis Reed
Anthony Romeo Family
Gary Schneider Family
Jeannie Schuman Family
Claudine Seader
Smiley & Vern Shulze
W. James Smith
Barbara Leichty St. John & James St. John
John & Kathy Steinbaugh
Richard Sullivan
Terry Wagner
Robert Watts



Memorial Donations

Thank you so much for these recent memorial donations. Donations received after this issue goes to print will be shown in the next issue.

In Memory of John A. "Jack" Steinbaugh (1930-2014)

Barbara & Jim Gigone
Ron & Arlene Leggett
Dick & Darlene DelPizzo
Jean Morgan
Barbara E. Hesson
Janet S. Jones

In Memory of William Chandler (1924-2014)

Rebecca Harney

In Memory of Sharon Asti-Caranci (1955-2014)

John T. Leary
Eugene & Virginia Caranci

In Memory of Charles P. "Chuck" Schmidt (1958-2014)

Eugene DiCarlo
Paula Elrod
Eugene & Virginia Caranci

In Memory of Richard A. Bodhaine (1929-2014)

Bridget Bacon
Jean Morgan

In Memory of Harry A. Mayor (1918-2014)

Bridget Bacon

***"In memory of the brave men and women
who fought for union rights
for the coal miners of Colorado"***

John Casey, Connecticut

The Museum Corner Bridget Bacon, Museum Coordinator

The efforts to create a small City park in honor of Victor Helburg are coming to fruition! Town marshal Victor Helburg was killed by a street peddler in 1915 and is Louisville's only fallen law officer. The group of volunteers working on the memorial, which is being planned to be located next to the Police Station, has raised over \$11,000 so far from about 60 people and companies. Look for information about the

groundbreaking to be held as part of Louisville's Arbor Day events, with a dedication to take place in Fall 2015. And if you'd like to donate, please make your check out to "Louisville History Foundation" and write "Helburg Memorial" on it, and send it to the Foundation at 749 Main St., Louisville, CO 80027. Thank you so much to the City of Louisville for its support and to all of the volunteers working on this project.

Copies of brochures showing Louisville's 12 buildings that are on the National Register of Historic Places are now available at the Museum and around town! This was a collaborative effort of the Museum and the Historic Preservation Commission. Thank you to the HPC for providing funding for the brochures.

Join members of the public and City staff for a public meeting for the Preservation Master Plan to take place on the evening of Wednesday, March 11, 2015, and look for more details on the City of Louisville website.

Thank you so much to Museum volunteers Mona Lee Doersam (for donating her talents and time to do the layout of every issue of *The Louisville Historian*), Deborah Fahey, Robert Sampson, Gail Khasawneh, Kate Gerard, Rebecca Harney, Duane Elrod, Patricia Lester, Christine Gray, Mary Kay Knorr, Patricia Murphy, Mary Ann Colacci, Brian Parchman, Memory Delforge, Carolyn Conarroe, Carol Williams, Don Ruth, Rosa Calabrese, and Ardeshtir Sabeti.

Also, thank you so much to the team of volunteers who have been working on the Museum's Oral History Program: Barbara Gigone, Ady Kupfner, Jean Morgan, David Kuykendall, Barbara Hesson, and Dustin Sagrillo. And thank you to the Louisville History Foundation for its financial support of this worthy project.

Thank you to those people who have recently contributed information about Louisville history. People always respond so kindly and with so much helpful information when I ask them questions about Louisville's past, and many others just volunteer it on their own. In the past few months, these people included Mike Negri, Vernon Zurick, Ady Kupfner, Chuck and Lois Waneka, Dave Ferguson, Shirley Bodhaine, Ron Leggett, Don Buffo, Paula Elrod, Eugene DiCarlo, Keith Helart, Randy Caranci, Ron Huffman, and William Kucharski. I'm sorry if I missed anyone!

Welcome back to Megan Huelman, who was an intern for the Museum in 2014 to catalog and develop procedures for digitizing historic photos from the Museum. It was due to her cataloging efforts that the County Assessor Cards for Louisville are now viewable online. More recently, we have been able to add fantastic historic photos of the Louisville area to the online digital

collection and we will continue to add more. We're delighted to have Megan back as an intern to work on cataloging and digitizing historic photos of the Louisville area. To view online the Assessor Cards and the newly added historic photos, look for the link on the Library & Museum website at www.louisville-library.org.

Thank you so much to Thomas Brennan for his service on the Louisville Historical Commission, and welcome to two new members who were recently appointed by City Council: Betty Scarpella and Julie VanLaanen. In January, the Commission reelected Dan Mellish as Chair, Anne Robinson as Vice Chair, and Gladys Levis-Pilz as Secretary. Also, the Louisville History Foundation is excited to welcome three new directors. Catherine Fahey Wessling and David Marks bring experience in marketing and communications, while Missy DiSalle Diehl brings experience in fundraising and event planning. Marilyn Hunt is currently continuing as Chair and Lynn Koglin is continuing as Vice Chair and Treasurer, and Catherine Wessling was newly elected as the Secretary of the Foundation. We all look forward to what lies ahead for both the Foundation and the Historical Commission!

Last, I would like to acknowledge Harry Mayor's many contributions to *The Louisville Historian*. Born in 1918, he recently passed away in November 2014. He wrote six lively articles that appeared in the *Historian* between 2007 and 2009. Here is what he wrote about the Acme Mine dump that was located in the middle of South Main Street. He explained that the dump was made of rock, clay, slate, and poor grade coal and that it burned continuously, and he continued:

The dump was the bane of our mothers. Dumps were forbidden territory for any kid to explore. But they were fascinating places, and many kids enjoyed the adventure of climbing the dump. However, if your mother ever found out, all hell broke loose. Dire predictions of losing your footing and rolling down the dump through smoke and fire, or breaking your leg or arm (or your fool neck) or falling into a fire hole and being burned alive only heightened the adventure. Each dump was a smoking, smelly cauldron of danger and excitement. Any kid worth his salt explored the dumps in town.

Thank you to Harry for letting us see Louisville through his eyes. His articles are available to read in the past issues that are online at the Museum website.

Donations to the Museum's Collection and Records

The Louisville Historical Museum accepted the following donations during the months of November through January. The City sincerely appreciates these recent donations!

Anthony Slavec – postcard showing the Rex Mine #2, certificate showing his completion of the eighth grade, and his Louisville High School diploma from 1942.

Ernest Hartnagle – historic photos, including original photos showing classes at the St. Louis School and digital images of family photos.

Shirley Elrod – her majorette boots from 1960-63 at Louisville High School.

Robert Junior – Marion Dionigi Junior's four high school yearbooks for 1955-1958.

Patricia Lester – 1963 "Lookout" newspapers from Louisville High School.

Sandra Rudosky – framed photo showing women in Louisville; digital image of the donor's great-grandmother, Emma Dixon Barker of Louisville; and a photo/postcard album that belonged to the donor's great aunt, Clara Barker of Louisville, who died in Denver in 1922 at the hands of her estranged husband. It seems very appropriate that Clara Barker's personal album has come back to Louisville.

Arlene Leggett – a 1958 sample ballot for town trustee, Coal Creek theater programs for 2014, and scans of school photos and documents.

Margaret Patten – small Lane cedar chest stamped "Steinbaugh's Hardware." Boxes like these were given to girls when they graduated from high school.

Adrienne Kupfner – original photos showing Alphonse Damelia and an interior kitchen scene in Colacci's Restaurant at 816 Main featuring Mary Poydock, Mary Menar, and Nora Raymond, plus a digital image of a drawing of the original Delforge family home that stood at 544 Grant.

Chuck Waneka – Army booklet given to his mother, Bessie Dixon, by one of the federal soldiers stationed in Louisville in 1914. (See more information in this issue.)

Carolyn Conarroe – Lions Club banquet program dated June 25, 1931 that marked the beginning of the Lions Club in Louisville.

Don Buffo – framed composite photos of the Louisville High School Class of 1969 that he worked to have put together recently, due to the fact that there was never an official one made for this class.

David Wyman – Two certificates relating to the Louisville VFW, framed together. They consist of a 1946 certificate showing the charter and a certificate with the names of the life members. The donor was the commander of the Louisville VFW for 12 years.

Museum Wish List

The Louisville Historical Museum would like to add to its collection the items described below. If you would be willing to donate any of the described items, please email museum@louisvilleco.gov or call 303-665-9048. If you would prefer not to part with an original photo or document, please contact us about how it can be scanned on our photo scanner. Donations to the Museum are tax deductible. Thank you for your support!

- Centaurus High School Yearbooks: 1974 to 2000, except for 1981 and 1990

- Composite photographs of Louisville High School's graduating classes:

- All classes before 1936 except for 1909, 1915, 1921, 1923, and 1925
- The classes of 1954, 1955, 1958, 1960, 1964, 1965, 1967, 1968, 1970, and 1971

- Coal mine photos and ledgers, and journals, letters, receipts, and other handwritten documents that relate to the Louisville area.

- Historical photos of homes and businesses in the old town part of Louisville (with or without people in the photos). Specific buildings need not be identified.

- Photos of the interior or exterior of Red Men's Hall; scenes showing Louisville's Little Italy and Frenchtown;

and interiors and exteriors of Louisville's saloons and pool halls.

- Old home movies and negatives of photos relating to the Louisville area.

- Photographs, programs, *The Lookout* school newspaper, and written memories relating to Louisville High School and Louisville Middle School.

- Photos from any era showing areas of current Louisville that were outside of the town's historic boundaries, such as South Boulder Rd., McCaslin Blvd., Dillon Rd., Cherry St., and Hwy 42.

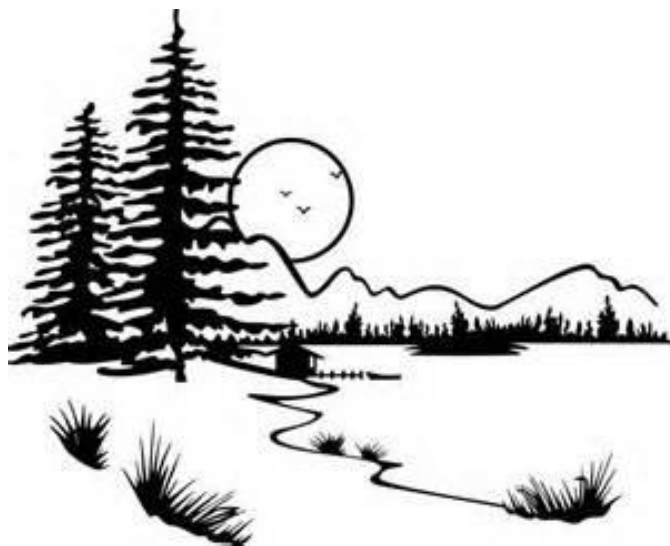
- Issues of *The Louisville Times*, or pages of it, from 1913 to 1942 and photos and information relating to Louisville's newspapers and publishers.

- Items relating to Louisville businesses, including menus, matchbooks, and ashtrays from Louisville restaurants.

- Items relating to the history of law enforcement in Louisville, including photos, records, and artifacts relating to town marshals, police chiefs, and the Police Department in general.

- Information and photos relating to federal troops from Fort Robinson, Nebraska who were stationed in Louisville in 1914-15.

- Information and photos relating to Harper Lake or the Harper Family.



**2015 Pioneer Award Recipient:
Richard "Dick" DelPizzo
Presented by David W. Ferguson,
Louisville Historical Commission**

The Louisville Historical Commission is pleased to announce that Richard "Dick" DelPizzo is this year's recipient of the Pioneer Award. This award is presented annually to a person who has contributed to the welfare and interests of the Louisville community. David Ferguson presented the award to Dick on January 22nd at the Louisville Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet.

Dick was born and raised in Louisville on the 1100 block of Main Street. He was the youngest of three children and has a sister, Lucille, and a brother, Frank. His dad, Joe, came from Italy after the First World War and settled in Louisville. His mother, Rose, was born in Louisville to Italian parents. During those years, coal mining was the big industry and provided employment for a lot of people. Dick's dad worked in the coal mines until he retired in the mid-1960s. His mother, for the most part, was a homemaker but did work part time at Jacoe's Store. She fell ill at an early age and passed away when Dick was 13 years old. These were not easy times for him and his dad, but they made it through.

Dick's dad, Joe, was wounded while fighting in the Italian Army with the Allies during World War I. He was one of the strongest men in Louisville and anchored the tug of war between the farmers and the miners on Labor Day. He was an excellent cook and made the finest wines in Louisville. Anything that could be fermented was made into wine or brandy. This was one man you only shook hands with once. His grip would paralyze you up to your shoulder.

You were never a stranger in the DelPizzo house. Joe would pour you a glass of wine, a shot, and a bottle of beer. He would also serve salami, cheese, and pepperoni. Gene Caranci, Don Ross, Joe, and I made hundreds of trips fishing at the Louisville Rod & Gun Club lakes and South Boulder Creek in Rollinsville. Joe always had plenty of Italian goodies, wine, and snake bite medicine. He was a great friend to the three of us and to anyone who knew him. He was a credit to his Italian heritage.

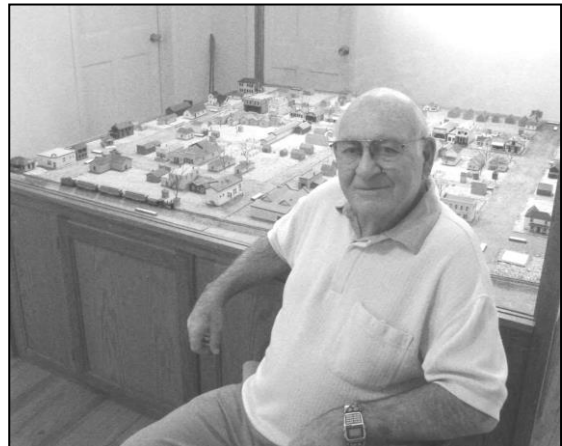
In high school, Dick was a typical teenager and sports were his big interest. Almost every kid in school went out for football and then basketball and track. During Dick's sophomore year, Louisville added wrestling. Since he was a terrible basketball player, he went out for wrestling. Not much better at that, either. The wrestling coach was the basketball coach and really didn't know

much about wrestling. Dick remembers that at the first practices, they would be paired off on the wrestling mat with the coach in the middle with a book of wrestling moves and he would instruct them on the method to accomplish the moves. That was the beginning of the wrestling program at Louisville High School. The school bought them black jackets and red shorts. They dyed long underwear black for the tights.

Dick also played trumpet in the Louisville High School band. This was an activity that he enjoyed very much. On occasion, he would get to play a couple of songs at a high school dance with the Vic Caranci Band. However, one of the greatest honors he had as a teenager was that he was asked by the American Legion to play taps at the Louisville Memorial Day ceremony.

Dick attended Otero Junior College in La Junta and also CSU. Of course, there was a cute little girl who lived in Frenchtown in Louisville who he just couldn't live without. So Darlene and Dick got married in 1960. He built his first house, on the north side of Louisville, when he was 23 years old. They had two children, Rose and Rich. They later moved to Boulder and then built their second house in Gunbarrel. They have two grandchildren, Charley and Dustin, and one great-grandchild, Sonny.

When Dick and Darlene first got married, Dick worked at the Plat Packing Co. in Denver and the Safeway meat market. In 1962, he started working at Rocky Flats in the Health Physics Department and was promoted to supervisor level after the big fire at the plant in 1969. As the years progressed, he worked in the Health Physics and Engineering and Construction groups. Later, he became the head of the Operational Safety and Radiation Monitoring group. Dick worked at Rocky flats for 32 years and was a shift superintendent when he retired in 1994. After retiring, he and his wife moved to Longmont.



Dick has always had an interest in building and construction. I guess that you could say that

woodworking is his hobby. He has built two houses and put a large addition on another house. He has also helped with other family construction projects. He also enjoys building furniture, cabinets, and a variety of other items. However, his greatest accomplishment in his eyes is the design and building of the Replica of Downtown Louisville at the Louisville Historical Museum. He was truly honored when he was given the OK to build the replica. He felt so strongly about the historic preservation of the town that he wanted to construct a model of Louisville as it looked in the early 1900s for people of all ages to enjoy for years to come.

Dick's other achievements include having been President of the Italian Club in Louisville, Cubmaster for Cub Scouts, and Little League baseball coach.

It is my honor to present the Pioneer Award to a longtime friend and great person, Richard "Dick" DelPizzo.

The six-foot by six-foot replica of historical downtown Louisville that Dick made can be viewed during regular open hours at the Louisville Historical Museum, and everyone who loves Louisville should stop by to see it!

The lead article of the Summer 2014 issue of The Louisville Historian was about how Dick went about making the replica. Visit the Museum to pick up a copy of the issue, or view it online at www.louisville-library.org.



Thanks to New and Renewing Members

<i>New Members</i>	
Barlow Family	Scott Leggett
John & Sherry Benedetti	Don & Barbara McKee
Charles & Amy Danforth	Tammy Milano Group
Leo Deborski	Sharon Mills
Patricia & Arnold Follendorf	Thomas S. Rice Family
Judy & Rusty Givens	Kristina Yamamoto & Ben Tuttle
Heron Family	Kirk Watson Family

<i>Renewing Members</i>	
Kris Ahlberg	Lori & Scott Chandler
James Ahlberg	Mary Chmielowiec
Randi & Jason Albright	Robert & Yolanda Cole
Jay & Julie Alexander	John Covell
Bill & Cheryl Andrews	Judy Cresswell
Linda Armantrout	Elisa & Alexandra Dalton
Brian & Elizabeth Armstrong	Hank & Penny Dalton
James & Sharon Askew	James De Francia Family
Karen Avery	Ann K. Del Pizzo
Bridget Bacon & Andrew Calabrese	Darleen Del Pizzo
Beth Barrett	Tony Del Pizzo Family Group
Jeanne Batza	Dino & Judy De Santis
Tom Beck Family	Anthony & Judy DeNovellis
Karl Becker Family	Joan Desmet
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Shirley Bodhaine Family	Barbara & Dan DiSalle
Earl & Barbara Bolton	Mark Discenza
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Jack Bowes Family	Roxane & David Dupuis
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John Bradley	Anne Dyni
Peter & Alexandra Bradley	Joyce & Virtus Einspahr
Bernard Funk & Deborah Brady	Donna & Adam Elnicki
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Martin Buffo	Dave & Debby Fahey
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Kerry Butterfield	Dennis & Janet Ferrera
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Eugene & Virginia Caranci	Patricia Finleon
Paula Caranci	Janice Lee & Tom Flewelling
Ed Carpenter	Pamela Forcey
Tom Carpenter	Shirley Fox
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Ada Johnson	Diane Marino
Jacqueline Johnson	Juanita Marino
Erik Weissenberger & Tonya Johnson	Sandra Marsh
Janet Jones	Dixie Lee Martella
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Gary Reddington	William Stengel Family
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Jeanne Reinhardt	Tom & Ann Stoffel
Johanna Renouf	Fred Stones
Madreen Richter	Jennifer & David Strand
Anne Robinson	Laurinda Sturr
Charles & Joan Robinson	Richard Sullivan
Darlene Rohr	

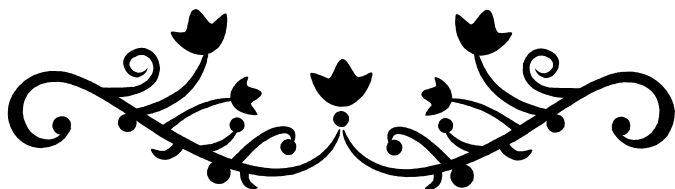
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Regrets

We extend our sincere sympathy to the families of lifetime member Harry Mayor and regular members Jack Steinbaugh and Richard Bodhaine.



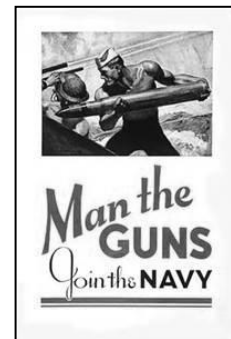
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Photos from the Collection of the Louisville Historical Museum

These images were donated to our Museum in recent months. Albert Mudrock, who served in the Navy during World War II, is shown on the steps of his house at 613 Grant. Another photo shows the fire at the Blue Parrot Restaurant on Thursday, April 21, 1988. Colacci Restaurant trucks are also shown in a photo from 1989-91. This picture was taken behind Colacci's (which was located at 816 Main) in the former City parking lot where the Louisville Public Library and its small surface parking lot are now located. Thank you so much to the donors!



Louisville Historical Museum
749 Main Street
Louisville, CO 80027

Return Service Requested

The Louisville Historian, Issue #105, Winter 2015

